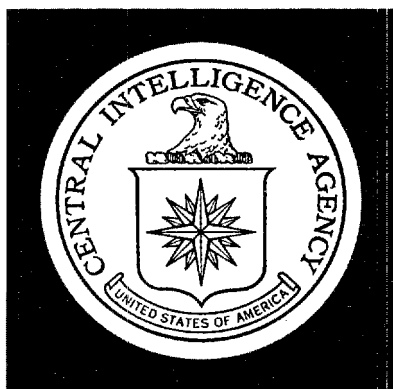


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Belgium-USSR: Belgian Foreign Minister Harmel has agreed to visit the USSR in March despite the reservations of some NATO countries over the timing.

Harmel, a strong advocate of detente, had suspected Soviet motives in issuing the invitation and brought the matter up in the North Atlantic Council. Some members there contended that the proposed timing would violate the agreed line to hold contacts with Moscow to a minimum and felt that such a high-level visit should wait at least until after the Alliance's 20th anniversary meeting in April.

Moscow will, of course, be pleased to welcome its first high-level visitor from a NATO country since the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

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